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ABSTRACT

Modern American medical education has its roots in the mid-nineteenth century when the idea of medical practice as an assortment of independent private ventures became institutionalized, and when the wealth of the industrial revolution led to the adoption of German standards of academic medical research. These events set the stage for our currently highly academic, research dominated teaching establishment with a rigid administrative and curricular form enforced by the American Medical Association, the Association of American Medical Colleges and the Liaison Committee on Medical Education. Despite many pressing problems, fundamental change seems unlikely due to strong tradition and the medical establishment's financial success. This book suggests the following changes: a definition of physician which goes beyond "independent, unsupervised practitioner"; strategic planning by individual medical schools and by the larger national bodies; increased emphasis on issues of delivery of medical care; an attempt to widen medical school programs; more publicity given to physicians doing socially-oriented research in community health; and an abandonment of the traditional fear among doctors of governmental interference and instead a willingness to enter into the discussion of issues relating to current health care problems and the government's role. A bibliography of approximately 120 items and an index are included. (JB)

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